

What is claimed is:

1. An anvil for providing support to a backed ply material being cut by an ultrasonic blade, the backed ply material traveling in a first direction, the ultrasonic blade having a tip, the ultrasonic blade being operable to travel along a path, the path being oriented in a transverse manner relative to the first direction, the anvil comprising:
  - a rigid base for securing the anvil to a cutting assembly;
  - a surface coinciding with the path, the surface being secured to the base; and
  - a groove disposed upon the surface, the groove being in cooperative alignment with the tip.
2. The anvil according to claim 1, wherein the rigid base comprises a metal.
3. The anvil according to claim 2, wherein the rigid base comprises steel.
4. The anvil according to claim 1, wherein the surface comprises a metal.
5. The anvil according to claim 1, further comprising an insert secured to the base, the surface being disposed upon the insert.
6. The anvil according to claim 5, wherein the insert comprises a high pressure laminate.
7. The anvil according to claim 5, wherein the insert comprises a polymeric material.
8. The anvil according to claim 7, wherein the insert comprises an ultra high molecular weight polymer.

9. The anvil according to claim 7, wherein the insert comprises nylon and Delrin®.
10. A system comprising:
  - an ultrasonic cutting tool comprising a stylus, the stylus comprising a tip; and
  - an anvil comprising:
    - a first surface to support a backed ply material at a first height;
    - a second surface to support the backed ply material at a second height; and
    - a third surface in cooperative alignment with the tip, the third surface being disposed between the first surface and the second surface, wherein the third surface provides support for the backing at a third height, the third height being relatively below the first height and the second height.
11. The system according to claim 10, wherein the third surface is a groove, the groove being disposed along a path traveled by the tip.
12. The system according to claim 10, wherein the anvil further comprises an insert, the insert comprising the third surface.
13. The system according to claim 12, wherein the insert comprises a polymeric material.
14. The system according to claim 13, wherein the insert comprises at least one of an ultra high molecular weight polymer and nylon.
15. The system according to claim 10, wherein the third surface includes a resilient material that deflects to the third height in response to force exerted by the tip.

16. The system according to claim 10, wherein the anvil comprises a dimensionally stable, rigid, and wear resistant material.
17. The system according to claim 16, wherein the anvil comprises a metal.
18. The system according to claim 16, wherein the anvil comprises a high pressure laminate.
19. The system according to claim 16, wherein the anvil comprises at least one of a polymeric material and a resin.
20. The system according to claim 10, wherein the first height and the second height are essentially the same.
21. A method of generating an anvil, the anvil providing support for a stylus of a cutting assembly while cutting a backed ply material, the method comprising:
  - disposing an anvil blank in the cutting assembly, the anvil blank including a carvable, dimensionally stable, rigid, and wear resistant material, the anvil blank further including an axis disposed in a perpendicular direction relative to a direction of travel of the backed ply material;
  - setting the stylus to contact the anvil blank;
  - drawing the stylus along the axis, wherein the stylus generates a groove in the anvil blank;
  - determining a depth of the groove; and
  - repeating the setting and drawing steps in response to the depth being less than a predetermined minimal depth.
22. The method according to claim 21, wherein the anvil blank includes a high pressure laminate.

23. The method according to claim 22, wherein the anvil blank includes Micarta®.
24. The method according to claim 21, further comprising:  
orienting an edge of the stylus in a direction perpendicular to the axis.